

# Posters Drawn by New York High School Youngsters Breathe Spirit of Patriotism and Service

## Red Cross Work, Economy Campaign and Food Production Appeal Most Strongly to Young Artists, Their Drawings Show

No Aid Given in Studies Submitted in Competition Among Fourteen Schools by Boys and Girls Who Average Under 18 Years of Age.

This is the day of posters—posters for recruiting, for Red Cross work, for home gardening, for everything that means war service for the country. New York is being treated to such a feast of this kind of art as has never been known before.

It is a fact, although not generally known, that the greater number of posters are conceived and executed by people under the age of twenty. It is only a small thing that is needed to change the course of a stream, and New York is having brought to her attention this week the fact that the youth of our country, through posters, are doing much by their appeals to change the ordinary citizen into a gardener, a nurse or a soldier.

There is an exhibit of posters in the Municipal Gallery of the Washington Irving High School which is proving one of the big achievements in the art course of the public schools of the city. The children who take this course were given the opportunity, a few weeks ago, to enter a preparedness poster contest. They were told that all work must be done out of school, without help of any kind, and prizes would be given those who accomplished the best results. Not even those most interested in the outcome had any idea that the results would be so astonishingly good.

### Fourteen Schools in Contest

Fourteen of the largest high schools entered the contest—High School of Commerce, Stuyvesant, Wadleigh, Julia Richman, Washington Irving and De Witt Clinton, of Manhattan; Morris and Evander Childs, of The Bronx, and the Eastern District High School, Manual Training, Commercial, Erasmus Hall and Bay Ridge, of Brooklyn.

The students in the high schools of the city average in age from fourteen to eighteen years, so that the work they do is really representative of the adolescent age. A casual observer would, however, see little in the poster work of these pupils which would not do credit to adults.

The two subjects upon which the posters are based are Red Cross and economy—the latter in relation to thrift in household management. The size of the poster was to be 20 by 30 inches, the colors whatever the fancy should dictate and the medium tempera. Tempera is a mixture of water color and body color, and well adapted to big, flat work. It was all a delightfully free proposition, a chance to work out ideas they might have on the subject of war service. Far ahead in June they could already see the glittering gold pieces and the sparkling medals which would go to the cleverest workers and thinkers. Did not each one have a chance of being one of the winners with the skillful hands? Yes, it was all free and large, and several hundred responded with the best that they could give. It was a chance to do something for the war, and beyond question they have done it, as all are testifying who have been to see the exhibit.

### All High-Grade Work

As one looks at this work of the big children of our city one feels, first of all, great satisfaction that he or she was not one of those who were called upon to decide upon the winners of the contest. There are so many that should be rewarded with a prize, but are not; in these drawings, color and printed appeal—a necessary part of each poster—are all good, and yet they do not carry the judges' mark of selection. On the other hand, there is hardly one which is marked for a prize which is not obviously well marked.

The School Art League, to show its interest in the contest and to encourage the contestants, took upon itself the offering of prizes. A first prize of \$5 in gold, a silver medal for second and a bronze medal for third were offered to each competing school, and two more prizes, a gold and a silver medal, which are to be awarded at large for the best two posters now as-



sembled in exhibit. The exhibit is made up of the posters which have won prizes, and, in addition, all those which have received special mention, so that it is, therefore, possible that a student who did not win a prize in the separate school trials may be awarded one by the final judges. From June 4 to June 7 exhibits of their own work were held in the different schools; local artists were chosen for judges, and the results for first prize are as follows: A. Schoenstadt, Evander Childs High School; Abraham Kaplan, Morris High School; T. Pinto, Stuyvesant High School; Hartwig A. F. Jacobsen, Commercial High School; Thomas Beggs, Manual Training High School;



Albert Lang, Bushwick High School; Alexander Cohen, Eastern District High School; Frances Smedley, Bay Ridge High School; Abbie Dollin, Erasmus Hall; Andrew E. Buzzell, De Witt Clinton High School; Clare Wilhelm, Wadleigh High School; Dagmar Jansen, Julia Richman High School; Morris Unger, High School of Commerce; and Sarah D. Miller, Washington Irving High School.

### A Pictured Call to Work

Some of the most striking posters are those that call the passerby to work on the farm. There is one in particular which recalls the wonderful Sorolla over in the Metropolitan Museum. To be sure, the poster deals

Not a Single Attempt Made to Get "Effect" Without Good Hard Work—Art School League Provides Small Prizes to Stimulate Efforts.

to good color arrangement. The brilliant red cross appears sometimes as a sign in the sky, sometimes a shining emblem in the dusk on the brown canvas of a hospital tent. Again, it appears as a flame against the gray of an ambulance threading its way among the wounded, or topping off the costume of a trim, white clad nurse. There is just one instance where the red of the cross does not blend with the prevailing color of the poster, but when one considers that all of the work was done out of school hours and without suggestions or assistance from the teachers the only wonder is that this mistake and many others were not frequently made.

War service through the munition factory was not forgotten, and there are two posters which show the grim, regular outlines of such a factory. In one, just outside the wall, there stands a Red Cross tent silently telling its own tale.

Battlefields, dying soldiers and quiet hospital wards all have their place in the poster exhibit. The youth of the country has already caught the solemnity of this new and awful thing that has come upon them, and these young artists, competing for pieces of gold, silver and bronze, have gone far beyond the thought of these banalities and painted in with their opaque tempera the very surges of their hearts.

### Certified Unaided Work

On the back of each poster one reads something to this effect: "I hereby certify that I have done this work unaided," or "This is my own work, I have had no help." Then one reads the name of some unknown public school pupil who has signed the note, and quite unconsciously sent out into the world one more appeal for a young man to offer his life to the savageries of war.

During the past week (June 11-17) the posters from the various competing high schools have been assembled in the Municipal Gallery of the Washington Irving High School, where they will hang until the summer vacation commences. Here the final judges will come for their decision on the work. Those having honorable mention will be considered as carefully as those which have already received prizes. The real merit of the work may be estimated, in some measure, by the prominence of the men who have been invited to make the final judgment and award the two remaining prizes. These are: Edwin H. Blasfield, of the Mural Painters' Society; Herbert Adams, president of the National Academy of Design; Frank Ballard Williams, president of the Salmagundi Club; Albert S. Bard, president of the Municipal Art Society, and Edward Robinson, president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

### Exhibit To Be Continued

After the schools close the exhibit will be moved to the Gallery of the Art Alliance of America, at 10 East Forty-seventh Street. It will be there for a short time, and will then be taken to some prominent gallery in Brooklyn. Requests have been received already for it, but its final destination has not yet been decided.

While America is not yet engaged in actual warfare, she may be said to be waging a poster war within her own boundaries. Never has there been such a flood of posters for any one cause as is now rolling over the country. From shop windows, quay ends, automobiles and church facades the one message goes forth: "Do your bit." Many a wavering patriot is undoubtedly making his decision for the army, the navy or some other branch of service through the sudden appeal of some boy's or girl's poster.

One is reminded of the prophecy that a little child shall lead them.



Drawings made without outside aid by high school students of city show few signs of immaturity

